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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 034174

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/06/2019  
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PREL, CA  
SUBJECT: SECRETARY CLINTON'S 4/6/2009 MEETING WITH CANADIAN  
FOREIGN MINISTER LAWRENCE CANNON

¶1. (U) Classified by WHA Assistant Secretary Thomas A. Shannon for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶2. April 6, 2009; 2:00 p.m.; Washington, D.C.

¶3. Participants:

U.S.

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Secretary Hillary Clinton  
WHA/CAN Director Ned Nolan  
Executive Assistant Joseph Macmanus  
WHA/CAN Karl Rios ? Note-taker

CANADA

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Foreign Minister Lawrence Cannon  
Ambassador Michael Wilson  
Adele Dion ? Director General - Arctic Issues

¶4. (C) Summary: Canadian FM Cannon met with the Secretary on the margins of the Joint Meeting of the Antarctic Treaty and Arctic Council. Cannon offered to host an Arctic meeting in the fall to discuss Arctic "principles" and expressed interest in postponing the entry of new observers and member countries to the Arctic Council. The Secretary agreed on the need for consensus on key issues and said the U.S. wouldn't object to a postponement on new members. Cannon also raised Cuba and offered Canadian assistance on the issue. In response to a request to join a "group of friends" on Sri Lanka, Cannon expressed interest in working with the Secretary on the issue. End Summary.

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Canada Hosting an Arctic Meeting  
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¶5. (C) Cannon indicated that it is important to focus on areas of joint interest in the Arctic and to define a common set of principles among Arctic Council members on areas such as fisheries, border, search and rescue, and safety. He underlined that Canada would like to host a conference in fall 2009 to achieve consensus on these issues; he pledged to send a letter to the Secretary outlining his idea for such a conference. In response to the Secretary's question about the ultimate goal of such a conference, Cannon indicated he would like to see a "protocol/common understanding" on the Arctic environment as the final product.

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New Member and Observer Requests  
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¶6. (C) On the question of the European Commission's request for observer status on the Arctic Council, Cannon stressed Canada's interest in delaying the application due to the Commission's attempts to ban the seal hunt. Cannon highlighted the strong dependence on seal hunting by those living in the Arctic and Atlantic Canada and that the EC did not understand the domestic Canadian sensitivities involved in a ban. The Foreign Minister indicated that the Danes supported a delay on the EC application but he was unclear

about the Norwegian position.

¶7. (C) Adele Dion said that Canada hoped to keep the EC's application off the agenda of the next Arctic Council meeting. In reviewing the possibility of other new permanent observers in the Arctic Council such as China, Korea and Italy, the Secretary agreed that the Council needs to achieve further agreement on a variety of Arctic issues and that she would not object to the postponement of new observers for now. We need to make clear, however, that this is a postponement not a rejection.

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Russian Bomber Flights  
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¶8. (C) In response to the Secretary's inquiry on recent Russian bomber flights near U.S. and Canadian airspace, Cannon highlighted that he raised the issue with the Russian Foreign Minister who replied that Russia would follow international conventions. Cannon underlined that he believed Russia was only "flying the flag" but was otherwise uncertain of Russian motivations. The Secretary suggested that the both seek further information and analysis from national defense authorities.

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Sri Lanka Group of Friends  
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¶9. (C) The Secretary raised a request to have Canada join a 'Group of Friends' for the conflict in Sri Lanka between the government and Tamil Tigers (LTTE). She stressed that the goal of the group would be to press for a political resolution to the conflict. She also asked if the GOC would be able to use its influence with its large Tamil Diaspora to pressure the LTTE to allow civilian evacuations and the flow of humanitarian assistance. Cannon agreed on importance of a political resolution to the conflict and indicated "he would work with" the Secretary on the issue.

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Cuba  
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¶10. (C) Cannon pointed out that the OAS is likely to request Cuba's reintegration into the body. Cannon offered Canada's assistance on Cuban issues and outlined its strong investment and political relations with Havana despite their disagreements over policies. The Secretary said that the U.S. would make changes on travel and remittance policies but stressed that the U.S. position on democracy and political prisoners would remain unchanged. Ambassador Wilson related a discussion with the top official at the Cuban Interest section and indicated he believes that Cuba prefers slow progress. Wilson also mentioned that the United States could be included in "democracy seminars" held by Canada to educate Cubans.

CLINTON